795 771 829 respect the Sanusi family they, nevertheless, wear their religion lightly. An informant, speaking of the merits and demerits of the conservative Muslim Brethern Association, said that "you should never listen to a holy man, for he will lead you straight to hell!" But upon meeting any member of the [576] [978] Sanusi family, all Bedouins greet him by kissing his hand. Besides a show of deference, this ritual act, in theory, transfers baraka from al-Sanusi to the layman.

648 641 The citizenship exemptions granted the Bedouins by Muhammad 'Ali have been rescinded by Abd al-Nasser. This has been one aspect of his program to imbue the Bedouin with political consciousness and promote participation in the nation-state. The Bedouins say that this is the way it should be: they want the right to own land and to accept the responsibility of defending the homeland. But they still do [651] not pay land taxes, and they feel justified in this because the desert "is very poor soil, and not like that of the Nile." Nor do they always heed the call to military duty, though they insist that they do.

648 179 423 Egyptian land reform laws would be impractical, or impossible to apply, in al-Qasr. In the Nile Valley, such laws were necessary. The majority of the Egyptian peasants can survive on less than one acre of land, and farms of under five acres comprise 44 per cent of the agricultural land area in the Nile Valley (Warriner 1962:204). Plots this

671 182 648 the Bedouins, the government soon discovered their own error, for they were unable to effectively manage group and tribal political relations: "They (the government) found out that they could not solve murders in the desert. They would arrest the killer but the trouble continued between families (i.e. feuding went on). There were more killings instead of less, and, finally, the government asked us to return to the 'awaiyid because it alone can solve murders in the desert." I was unable to document the claim that the government had "abolished" the 'awaiyid in 1933, but a number of officials who worked at the Governor's Office in Marsa Matruh said that it was true.

671 641 577 571 554 In al-Qasr, and in the Western Desert in general, adherence to law and political order rests upon the conviction that each individual and territorial group have guaranteed rights which are related to honor and property. A violation of any single man's honor or property may easily be interpreted, according to the principle of collective responsibility, as an offense against the rights of a group. And in this sense, legal and moral violations in Bedouin society are relative to the structure of interrelations, and they must be regulated with reference to the various levels of the authority structure.

181 641 578 571 Bedouins place a high value on political order, but also on the idea that political order can only be guaranteed through a man's willingness "not to allow another to take any

181 of his rights;" a man should be courageous enough to fight
•641 for what belongs to him and his family. These values, which
578
571 become political values in a tribal context, coupled with the idea of self-help make for a political order which is ultimately based upon the law of blood-revenge and feud. At least this is the case where the external system of authority relations
578 is concerned. But force as the ultimate mechanism for the
571 establishment of political order is better considered an
182 extreme, and only one of the mechanisms used by the Bedouins in the process of conflict regulation. The attempt is to establish a balance of rights, concerning honor and property, and not to go beyond another's boundaries lest he retaliate. Force, as a coercive institution, can never be the sole basis of political structure, as Schapera has shown in the case of the Bergdama and Bushmen (1956:211-221). Thus the Bedouins
[681] say blood-revenge would be impossible within the secondary
* [613] corporate group; relations this important cannot be based
[682] upon force. In the case of homicide within this group compensation is immediately forthcoming.

571 Also, it has been pointed out that self-help and
672 collective responsibility do not operate indiscriminately.
* 613 That is, an individual cannot depend upon the backing of
[578] his group irrespective of his own motivations in a particular situation which calls for retaliation or threatened the group with retaliation. Individual responsibility figures in cases

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

strative posts and contain not more than a few hundred persons. Shahhat and Tubruq had been Turkish posts before the Italians made them administrative centres. Taukra and Talmaitha had been Sanusiya lodges. Suluq and Qaminis were Italian creations. Marsa Susa (Apollonia) was first occupied by Cretan refugees during the Turco-Greek war of 1897. Ajadabiya, the town of which the Arab historian al-Bakri of the eleventh century spoke in such glowing terms, had ceased to be a settled centre until the Turks made it an administrative post. During the period of truce between the Sanusi and the Italians from 1917 to 1922 it became the seat of the Sanusi Amir, Sayyid Mahammad Idris, and afterwards an Italian administrative and commercial centre.

It has been noted that almost all the townsmen of Cyrenaica are immigrants from the west, from Morocco to Tripolitania, and the Bedouin regard them as foreigners and often with some distaste, especially the Tripolitanian immigrants. It is true that there is a small element of Bedouin origin in the towns, for the more stable and poorer Bedouin living near towns sometimes drift into them; but when they do so their descendants soon lose their links with the tents and their tribal status. The road to town life is a way along which there is no return, for the townsmen are not only foreigners, but their food, their speech, their dress, their manners, their interests, their loyalties, and in general their way of life and their sentiments, are different. The Bedouin visit the towns from time to time, but they do not feel at home in them, and they do not look at home in them either. In a town one can spot a Bedouin at a glance by his appearance, his step, his dignity, his naivety, and his loud voice, which sometimes startles the shopkeeper with whom he disputes a price.

The road to the towns is not only a way along which there is no return, but is a one-way track. A Bedouin can become a citizen, but a citizen can never become a Bedouin. He cannot live the life of the tents. Hence the Bedouin say that while it is always bad for a Bedouin girl to marry a townsman, it is possible for her to adapt herself to urban life, but it is out of the question for a Bedouin to marry a townsman's daughter, for it is impossible for her to become a daughter of the tents.

The *bwadi*, Bedouin, and the *hadur*, citizens, are separate

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

632 communities. They are strangers to each other who meet but
369 do not mix. There is a barrier between them and each distrusts
641 the other. Nevertheless there is a measure of economic interdependence between them, and the tribes and the towns affect each other politically. In Turkish times the urban population,
632 which, as we have seen, was small and contained a high pro-
439 portion of Jews, was engaged in trade and domestic industries.
438 The townsmen bought from the Bedouin animals, hides, wool,
369 clarified butter, honey, beeswax, and ostrich feathers (ostriches were still hunted in the southern steppe in those days), and they supplied the Bedouin with those things he required but could not, or would not, make for himself: tea, sugar, rice, cloth, horseshoes, musket balls, flints, gunpowder, and earthenware. The urban craftsmen also made leather goods, manufactured salt from sea water, and conducted trade and exchange. Imports came by sea from Tripoli, Marseilles, London, Malta, Alexandria, and Crete, and overland from Alexandria.

But the townsmen of Cyrenaica never dominated the country as they dominate most of the Arab lands, where through usury, intimidation, monopoly of trade, and influence in the administration and the courts they have reduced the countryman to the position of landless labourer or *métayage* serf. There was nothing in the Bedouin way of life which gave an opening to the usurer. Moreover, the towns had no monopoly of trade for, if necessary, the Bedouin could, since they were self-supporting in necessities, either go without urban supplies or obtain them overland from Egypt, as they showed during their war with the
[565] Italians. Consequently there were no rich landowning families living in the towns at the expense of the country-side, no aghas, beys, and pashas; and an educated middle class hardly existed outside the small official circle and lacked both wealth and influence. In general it may be said that in Cyrenaica the towns were not parasites on the country, but had their proper functions as trading centres and suppliers of the needs of the Bedouin population. The markets were free, not tied to town societies.

632 Nor could the Bedouin be coerced by force or law. The tribes
*648 were largely inaccessible and they were stronger than the towns,
369 even with the administration behind them. The Bedouin were not afraid of the Turkish Administration, which sat very lightly on their shoulders, and they did not use the courts. The

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

175 648 [167]

first caused misgivings in Rome and afterwards led to the destruction of the Italian armies in North Africa and their ejection from the continent. A sullen Arab population in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and a hostile Arab and Muslim world were, in view of the coming storm, so clearly contrary to Italian interests that a more conciliatory policy, at any rate in words, was adopted and Balbo was entrusted with the difficult task of putting it in effect against a background of slaughter and repression. Once again the Italians had waited too long.

III

The ups and downs of Italian fortunes in Cyrenaica and in the world are reflected in the various decrees which defined the juridical status of the Arabs. In giving a brief account of these decrees it must be kept in mind that whilst they referred to the whole Arab population they really affected only the Arabs of the towns, and even in the towns only those few persons, mostly officials, who actively collaborated with the Italians; and that till 1932 the Italians had no certain or complete control outside the towns.

175 648 641

At the beginning of the first Italo-Sanusi war the Arabs were in law Turkish subjects. By a Royal Decree of 5 November 1911, Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were declared to be under the full sovereignty of the Kingdom of Italy. The status of the Cyrenaican Arabs was fixed by the Royal Decree of 6 April 1913, which declared all born in the country, wherever resident, to be *sudditi italiani*, provided they were not Italian citizens or foreign citizens or subjects. They retained their Muslim personal law, but were subject in other respects to whatever regulations the Italians saw fit to impose on them. They were permitted to hold posts in the armed forces and administration of the colony, and persons desirous of acquiring Italian citizenship might apply for it if they possessed residential qualifications, though by taking it they became subject to Italian personal law. These early decrees were more in the nature of administrative than constitutional law. A constitution, in the continental sense, was promulgated in 1919 after the Italians had signed a truce with the Sanusi.

The agreements entered into with the Sanusi between 1917

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

and 1922 and the efforts made by the Italians during those years to build up a democratic system of government in Cyrenaica were, as we have seen, largely due to defeatism and political unrest at home, but they sprang also from a genuine belief in peace and Wilsonian principles among the men at that time in power in Italy. It is possible that the local Governor, Giacomo de Martino, also believed in them. Early in his term of office the Royal Decree of 31 October 1919, called the *Legge Fondamentale per la Cirenaica*, was promulgated. The natives of the country who were not *cittadini italiani metropolitani* were defined as *cittadini italiani* and thus received status equal to that of Italians, but not identical with it, because the Arabs kept their Muslim personal law. They also enjoyed guarantees of personal liberty, inviolability of domicile and property, the right to compete in military and civil careers and professions, even in the Kingdom of Italy, electoral rights (a local Parliament was set up at Banghazi), the right of petition to the National Parliament, and rights of sojourn and emigration. Respect of religion and local custom was guaranteed, liberty of the press and right of meeting were recognized, citizens could not be conscripted for military service, no fiscal tribute could be imposed which was not the same for all or without consent of the local Parliament, revenue from taxes was to be used for Cyrenaican purposes exclusively, the Arabic language was compulsory in the teaching of certain subjects in the schools and in certain official publications, and no precepts contrary to Islam were to be taught. In general, all the inhabitants of Cyrenaica, whether Arab or Italian, were equal before the law. An adult Arab could acquire metropolitan citizenship if he fulfilled certain conditions. The decree revoked the earlier one of 6 April 1913 relating to Italian subjects, and other decrees and laws, though not formally abrogated, seem to have lapsed by substitution save in so far as some of the administrative machinery created by them remained of necessity in operation.

This basic law of 1919 was as unwise as it was generous. The Bedouin may have enjoyed the elections, but to have formally handed over the country to the Arabs was detrimental to Italian prestige, for it was a confession that the Italians were unable to control it themselves. Moreover, the Chamber of Deputies, which was to the Bedouin a glorified *mi'ad*, or Shaikhs' gathering,

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

was expected to run the country with machinery with which they were totally unacquainted. Arabs being what they are, and circumstances being what they were in 1919, the constitution could hardly have been other than a failure. Indeed it is not surprising that Fascist writers later poured scorn on these well-meant efforts of pluto-democracy.[1] They were particularly shocked by the grant of Italian citizenship to the Arabs, especially as these same Arabs were exempted from compulsory military service. Under Federzoni, the first Fascist Minister for the Colonies, policy was in this matter, as in others, completely reversed. All agreements with the Sanusi were, as has been noted, torn up, and into the waste-paper basket with them went the local Parliament and the constitution of 1919. In its place was issued by the Royal Decree of 26 June 1927 the *Legge Organica per l'Amministrazione della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica*. In a sense this was a new, and Fascist, constitution though its constitutional content was subordinated to its administrative and judicial content. By it the Arabs ceased to be *cittadini italiani* and became *cittadini italiani libici*, they lost the right to free exercise of military and civil careers outside the colonies, electoral rights (parliament had in any case been abolished), the right to petition to the National Parliament, &c., and there was no mention of the liberty of the press, of the right of meeting, of freedom from military conscription, and of the protection of the Arabic language in public instruction. In general, the Arabs were no longer equal with the Italians before the law. Metropolitan citizenship might still be asked for under certain conditions. Application of this decree was several times postponed and it appears never to have come into operation.

Bedouin resistance in both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica still caused the Italians much trouble even as late as 1929 and on both military and political grounds it was deemed advisable to place the two countries under single direction. This was done by the Royal Decree of 24 January 1929 which placed the two colonies under Pietro Badoglio and by the Royal Decree of 3 December 1934, *Ordinamento Organico per l'Amministrazione della Libia*, which, as described in the last section, divided the single colony into four provincial commissariats and a mili-

[1] Alberto Stern, 'Il nuovo Ordinamento Fondamentale della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica', *Rivista delle Colonie Italiane*, 1934, p. 1027.

[113]

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

tary command of the Sahara. The other Articles of the 1934 decree were designed chiefly to meet the new conditions arising, or likely to arise, from colonization by nationals. In no important respect did it alter the status of the Arab population or what rights it still possessed. In the first enthusiasm of turning Libya into a metropolitan colony the Arabs were of secondary interest to those who made the laws.

In view of the coming struggle between the powers of Europe, already seen by Mussolini to be inevitable, the Italian Government considered it advisable to pay more attention to the feelings of its colonists and native peoples. To encourage the colonists already in the country and those about to join them from Italy a Royal Decree was promulgated on 9 January 1939 declaring Libya to be an integral part of the Kingdom of Italy, its four provinces becoming the ninety-seventh, ninety-eighth, ninety-ninth, and hundredth provinces of the Kingdom. The military status of the Libyan Sahara remained unchanged. The colonists no longer had to feel that they had left their fatherland for inhospitable shores. The *Colonia* had become *Terra Italiana*. The *Quarta Sponda*, Italy's Fourth Shore, had become a political fact. At the same time, to quiet any uneasiness which the incorporation of their country in the Kingdom of Italy might create among those educated Arabs whose services the Italians needed, and to implement the promise Mussolini had made during his tour of Libya in 1937 that he would remember the part played by Libyan volunteers in the Ethiopian campaign, the Decree offered the Arabs a new special citizenship which took the place of the right of acquiring metropolitan citizenship allowed in the earlier decrees and now abrogated. That the Italians had attached importance to the partial assimilation of a small *élite* of natives is shown by the retention of the right of acquiring metropolitan citizenship through all the decrees and laws, from the invasion of Libya in 1911 till the present decree, in both pre-Fascist and Fascist times. It had been found, however, that the Arabs had not availed themselves of the privilege. Employees of the administration could not feel that any advantages they might derive from it could compensate them for loss of status before the religious courts in matters of personal law, a loss considered shameful even by whole-hearted collaborators. Also, the new special citizenship,

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

cittadinanza italiana speciale, was more in accordance with Balbo's policy of parallel development than acquisition of metropolitan citizenship.

The new special citizenship could be acquired, without prejudice to Muslim personal law, by persons who had reached the age of eighteen, provided they had a good record and had in some way or other served the State or could read and write Italian. The status carried with it certain privileges: the right to bear arms, the right to be inscribed in the Arab Blackshirt Organization, the right to a military career in Libyan units (now withdrawn from other Libyans), the right to become mayor in Arab communities and adviser in mixed Italo-Arab communities, and the right to come under the *Ordinamento sindacale-corporativo*, an ordinance by which the Fascist guild system had been adapted to suit colonial conditions, and to take some part in the activities of these guilds. These rights could be exercised only in Italian African territories and no Arab could, in any case, occupy posts or practise professions which would necessitate Italians serving under him.

The reception of the new decree by the colonists and by Arab employees of the Administration was enthusiastic. It may be doubted, however, whether the sentiments expressed by the mudirs, the qadis, and some of the richer merchants, in the telegrams of thanks they sent to Mussolini and Balbo were felt. It was tacitly assumed to be a condition of continued employment that special citizenship should be applied for. The first batch of diplomas included ninety Cyrenaican names, almost all of native officials and government pensioners of the urban centres: the decree could not have been of the slightest interest to the Bedouin. Conscription for military service followed shortly afterwards. Of their bounty the Italians had given to the Arabs of Cyrenaica a *Patria, l'Italia Fascista*, and they were expected to show their gratitude by fighting for it. On 10 June 1940 Italy entered the war on the side of Germany.

Thus in 1911 the Arabs of Cyrenaica became enemy subjects and were afterwards declared to be Italian subjects. In 1919 they became Italian citizens. When the Italians renewed operations against them in 1923 those who resisted were declared to be *ribelli*. Under the Fascists they lost the Italian citizenship they had been granted under the democratic régime of 1919 and

3:Evans-Pritchard E-4, 5 (1942-1944) 1949 MT9 Libyan Bedouin MT9
(1837-1942) Sanusi

became instead Italian-Libyan citizens. In 1939 they were granted the privilege of applying, if they had the necessary qualifications, for a special Italian citizenship, a status half-way between that of the ordinary Arab of the country and that of the Italian colonists. There were, therefore, in Cyrenaica in 1940 three categories of citizenship, that of the *cittadini metropolitani*, Italian settlers and officials, that of the *cittadini italiani speciali*, a small intermediate urban class of educated Arab officials, and that of the *cittadini italiani libici* (*musulmani*), which comprised almost the entire native population of the country. These changes in the civil status of the Arabs were to a considerable extent a response to the development of the political situation in Cyrenaica itself. The Royal Decree of 1913 was an optimistic anticipation of easy victory; the Royal Decree of 1919 was an acknowledgement of political and military failure; the Royal Decree of 1927 was a sign that apathy and compromise had given way to determination to fight the Bedouin if necessary, and even by preference, to the point of extermination; the Royal Decree of 1934 marked the end of all resistance and envisaged the settlement of Italian colonists on the best lands of the country; and the Royal Decree of 1939 signalled the realization of this programme and at the same time made a bid for co-operation of the Arab intelligentsia. But to an equal extent the changes in civil status were determined by political events in Italy and in Europe. The Royal Decree of 1913 was a plain colonial declaration such as any European Power would have made in similar circumstances. In 1919 Italian politics were defeatist, demagogic, socialist, and internationalist, and the Royal Decree of that year was a stew of these ingredients. The Royal Decrees of 1927 and 1934 were typical Fascist pieces of legislation with emphasis on State requirements rather than on citizenship and the rights of the individual, and showed a strong bias towards bureaucratic centralization and hypertrophy. The Royal Decree of 1939 bore the stamp of empire.

IV

The Bedouin were altogether unimpressed either by Italian propaganda or by their social services, and they did not believe in their promises of future benefits. *'Bukra al-'id'*, 'The feast